

REMARKS

By the present Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have amended the claims to remove the multiple dependency and to otherwise place the claims in conformance with U.S. practice. Further attached is an Abstract on a separate sheet.

Entry of the foregoing and prompt and favorable consideration of the subject application on the merits are respectfully requested.

If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at his or her earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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Application No. Unassigned
Attorney's Docket No. 010315-152

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment
dated May 29, 2001

Marked-up Claims 1 through 11.

1. (Amended) A method of removing [sulphides] sulfides and other volatile contaminants from liquor vapor condensate from a pulp manufacturing process, [characterized therein, that] wherein the said liquor vapor condensate is fed into a stripper [(1)], which is part of a closed loop comprising said stripped [(1)] and a regenerative thermal oxidization process (RTO) [(2)], in which loop a gas [(4)], primarily consisting of air and such components formed or stripped off in the loop, is circulated, and where the circulating gas is stripping off [sulphides] sulfides and other volatile components from the liquor vapor condensate [(5)], whereafter the gas stream [(6)] is fed into a RTO-process [(2)], where the stripped off components are combusted under formation of SO₂, and thereafter is the SO₂ enriched gas [(7)] fed either to a SO₂ scrubber [(3)], where preferably alkali is used as absorption medium [(8)], whereafter the circulating gas is returned to the stripper [(1)].

2. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, [characterized in, that] wherein the SO₂ scrubber [(3)] is part of the closed loop.

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3. (Amended) A method as claimed in [claims 1 or 2, characterized in, that] Claim 1, wherein a minor portion of the gas [(10)] is bled off from the loop, at the same time air or some other oxygen containing gas [(9)] is supplied, to ensure that sufficient oxygen is present to safeguard that the oxidization in the RTO-process [(2)] takes place.

4. (Amended) A method as claimed in [anyone of the preceding claims, characterized in, that] Claim 1, wherein the alkali [(8)] used as absorption medium is oxidized white liquor.

5. (Amended) A method as claimed in [anyone of the preceding claims, characterized in, that] Claim 1, wherein the degree of acidification in the SO₂ scrubber [(3)] is controlled to ensure sufficient amount of SO₂ remaining in the gas [(4)] when it is returned to the stripper [(1§)], wherein SO₂ acidifies the condensate [(5)] and thereby contributes to enhance the stripping off of [sulphides] sulfides from the condensate.

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6. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, [characterized in, that]
wherein a heat exchanger is installed at a suitable place in the closed loop, to recover or
supply energy and thereby to control the temperature in the system.

7. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, [characterized in, that]
wherein the amount of recirculated gas versus the amount of condensate is controlled for
the purpose of optimizing the methanol content in the condensate.

8. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 7, [characterized in, that]
wherein such condensate is used as process water in the bleach plant to reduce the
bleaching chemical cost.

9. (Amended) A method as claimed in Claim 1, [characterized in, that]
wherein the gas [(10)] being bled off from the system is minimized by using pure oxygen
or an oxygen enriched air mixture, necessary as make up gas [(9)] for the oxidation.

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10. (Amended) A method as claimed in [claims 1 or 2, characterized in, that]
Claim 1, wherein the bled off gas [(10)] from the system is scrubbed with regard to SO₂
in a separate scrubber, which [preferably] is made up of several absorption steps.

11. (Amended) A method as claimed in [anyone of the preceding claims,
characterized in, that] Claim 1, wherein the SO₂ level is raised to such a level in the
system that the absorption medium in the SO₂ scrubber gets sufficient acidic, so that this
fluid can be utilized as acidification agent in other areas of the pulp mill, [e.g.,] or the
bleach plant or the tall oil plant.